

The Examiner has stated that claims 1, 2, 8 and 18-20 of the present application are considered to be unpatentable over newly filed claims 29-33. Applicants respectfully disagree with this opinion of the Examiner and maintain that above referred to claims are patentably distinct over claims 29-33. In particular, an element of claim 1 is "thread collecting means. . .adapted to collect threads passing through the thread guiding means. . ." Claims 2 and 8 depend from claim 1 and include the same structural limitation. Claims 18-20 include the same recitation at lines 16-18 of claim 18.

While the "means plus function" recitation in the final portion of claims 29, 31 and 33 may be broad enough to include the thread collecting means utilized by Applicants in the valve holder of the present invention, it is not anticipatory of the claimed invention, nor would it be obvious to utilize such "thread collecting means" as the specific means to accomplish the function recited in claims 29, 31 and 33. Accordingly, when considering the totality of the present invention as set forth in claims 1-28 hereof, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims would be patentable over the newly submitted claims 29-33.

Respectfully submitted,


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